

November 12, 2018

President Ali Houshmand
Rowan University
Glassboro, NJ 08028

Dear President Houshmand,

As the Cross Country and Distance Coach for Rowan University's Women's Cross Country team, I would like to thank you for your statement addressing the dress code restrictions for female athletes at the University. This incident greatly impacted the athletes on the Women's Cross Country and I believe it was important to have their voices heard. Your swift action is not only appreciated by the Women's Cross Country team but the entire Rowan University community.

However, I write to call to your attention inaccuracies shared in the Rowan Advisory sent at 3:02PM on Friday, November 9, 2018 where it claimed that Rowan Cross Country are prohibited from using facilities and that the issue stemmed from scheduling conflicts. In my opinion, these statements need to be addressed and clarified promptly. This information is false and seems to serve as a coverup to quiet the media and mask the real issues at hand. This message also adds fuel to the fire that has been building over the past few years and is creating a toxic relationship between certain athletic teams.

In Friday's message it stated, "As is common at many institutions, the policy dictates that teams use our athletic venues one team at a time." The article explained, in error, that the Cross Country team was no longer allowed to use the track at the Rowan stadium since it conflicted with this policy. There is no written documentation of this policy and this was never the root cause of the issues that surfaced last week. However, if this happens to be another example of a *verbal policy*, this policy was implemented without input or feedback from the coaches of the teams that would be directly impacted. I strongly advise the University to avoid verbal policies that are designed to favor or benefit one team and that do not allow for coordination with other teams who also use the facility.

Additionally, the advisory claimed that the Cross Country has a mixed practice schedule that varies day to day and that the Cross Country team's designated practice time is after the Football team's use of the stadium. Both claims are again inaccurate as the Cross Country team practices every day at 3:30pm sharp. Many of the Cross Country runners take class during the evening to accommodate the daily practices.

Lastly, the advisory noted that the Cross Country coach historically made alternate plans for the team to use Glassboro High School's track for practices. This is not a longstanding practice and only recently happened because Coach Ringo Adamson felt pressured by the University's Athletic Department and Football staff to relocate after accusing the Cross Country runners to be a distraction to the Football players. The only case where the Rowan Cross Country or Track

teams would practice at the local high school was when scheduling conflicts with other athletic games or University events arose. In the four plus years I have worked at the University, neither the Cross Country or Track teams had issues with being able to use the track for workouts. Both Alumni and current students can attest to this fact.

The real issue at hand and which ultimately caused the events last week to unfold is the disrespectful and inappropriate behavior Coach Jay has shown to the female members of the Cross-Country team, Coach Ringo Adamson, and myself. During the Cross Country team's workout last week, Coach Jay aggressively confronted Coach Ringo Adamson by getting in his face and claiming that the Cross Country runners were a distraction to his players. Not only is this extremely unprofessional for a faculty member to display in front of students but inaccurate given the fact that no member of either team engaged with one another and it was the Football team that was playing loud music in the middle of the field.

Another issue I have was at the coaches meeting at the Dream Park for the Atlantic Region coaches on Friday, November 9th after the article was published. Mr. Gilmore confronted both Coach Ringo Adamson and Coach Dimit asking if I was behind the article written by Ms. Capone when I was no less than 15ft away from him. Then he, in his bullying demeanor, turns to Coach Ringo Adamson and Coach Dimit and yells, "Don't ask me for anything!". This was a direct threat to our Cross Country program and shows the toxic environment our student athletes are being exposed to and in front of the 60+ coaches and NCAA representatives.

I coach on passion, not pay. I look after the members of the Cross Country team as if they were my family and am committed to not only empowering them on the track as athletes, but as students and young professionals preparing to enter the world. This incident is not about scheduling conflicts or unwritten policies that have never been an issue for either teams. This is about a members of the Rowan Administration disrespecting other coaches as well as student athletes. This is about allowing egos to believe that their athletes and or staff are above other student athletes and refusing to work with other coaches find a solution in a respectful manner.

The Cross Country team had a great recruit class last year and these issues need to be resolved before they further impact the student athletes. I would appreciate the opportunity to continue this conversation in person and I can be reached at 609-254-0916. Thank you for your time, President Houshmand.

Sincerely,